

M E M O R I A L

Concerning the
Present State of the PROTESTANT
RELIGION in *France*.

In which is shewn,

By many Instances, to what Degree CRUELTY
is now carried on against those, who dare
openly profess it in that Kingdom.

Bristol, Sept. 2. 1747.



Y the Advices we have lately received both from *France* and the adjacent Countries, it appears, that they are now determined in that Kingdom to make use of the utmost Severities against their Protestant Subjects. The said Protestants had, since the Year 1743, enjoyed some Toleration, the Court being persuaded from a Thousand Proofs, that in their religious Assemblies, nothing pass'd, that was contrary to the State; that they held them without Tumult; that they were without Arms of any Kind; and that they prayed God for the Prosperity of the King and his august Family; perpetually recommending Submission and Obedience to his Majesty, agreeably to the Acts passed in their last national Synod, that was held *August* 18, 1744. The Court, I say, which had a thousand Means to convince themselves of the Innocence of their Assemblies, did not only not oppose, but seem'd rather, by their Forbearance, to authorize them,

Under

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Under Favour of this Calm, the Protestant Religion made considerable Progress: Many, who out of Fear, did not dare to profess it, have publickly shewn their Zeal for it; and others, who formerly had been forced by Violence to forsake it, have readily embraced it again; and these last have been so many in Number, that by a Computation, made by the Roman Catholicks themselves, it has, in the space of seven or eight Months, amounted to 27000 on the Side of *Montauban*, and in that Neighbourhood. Upon this, the Roman Catholick Clergy took the Alarm; fearing that such Conversions would considerably diminish their Revenues, by taking from them the casual Profits, arising from Christenings, Marriages, &c. They have left no Means untry'd, to engage the Court to interest itself in an Affair which so nearly concerned them. In order to support their Instances the better, they made them at a Time, when they were about to furnish the King with a free Gift of several Millions of Livers; and, if Credit may be given to certain Advices, they gave it very strongly to be understood, that they were a Body, which was not to be slighted: In short, after trying all imaginable Means, they obtained two Edicts of the Court against the Protestants of *Montauban*, one of the 1st, the other of the 16th of *February* 1745. They were not, 'tis true, intirely new; the first was published the 11th of *September* 1726, but they added to it a severe Article concerning Preachers. The second is a Repetition, Word for Word, of that which was published the 9th of *November* 1728. What is most remarkable, is that, amongst all the Edicts that have been published against the Protestant Assemblies, they have chosen two of the most rigid, or rather, the most unjust; but that every one may judge of their Contents, we shall only exhibit them such as they were published; whereby it will be plain, that where-ever a true Roman Catholick Clergy has the upper Hand, there is no Evil, that the Protestants have not Reason to expect.

The

*The King's Ordonnance concerning People of the
Pretended Reform'd Religion, of the 1st of
February, 1745.*

By the King's Order.

THE King being informed, that, notwithstanding all Exercise of the pretended Reformed Religion is forbidden by his Edicts, Declarations and Ordonnances, there have been nevertheless of late, several Assemblies in the District of *Montauban*; and desiring to provide against it, his Majesty has ordered and does order, That, conformably to his said Edicts, Declarations and Ordonnances, all Preachers, who have convoked, or shall convoke Assemblies in the said District, and who have preached or shall preach, or who have or shall exercise therein any Function, be arraign'd, convicted and punished; as likewise all and every Subject or Subjects of his Majesty, of what Quality or Condition soever, who shall have been, or may be found hereafter, in the said Assemblies, and who shall be there taken in the Fact; his Majesty willing, that they be condemned to suffer the Pains expressed in the said Edicts, Declarations and Ordonnances: And, moreover, with regard to those, who shall be known to have assisted at the said Assemblies, but who have not been arrested upon the Spot, his Majesty wills and requires, that, by the Orders of the Intendant and Commissary in the said District, the Men should be immediately sent, without any Hearing or Tryal, to his Gallies, to serve there as Slaves during their Lives; and the Women and Daughters to be shut up, for ever, in Places which shall be assigned them.

His Majesty commands and orders the said Intendant and Commissary in the said District of *Montauban*, and his Bailiffs, Chief Justices, and other Officers and Justices whom it may concern, each in his

respective Station, to pay exact Obedience to the present Ordonnance, which shall be read, published and posted up, where-ever it may be necessary, that no Person may pretend Ignorance thereof. Done at *Ver-sailles* the first Day of *February*, in the Year 1745.

And lower

Signed *Louis*,
By the King,
Phelypeaux.

Ordonnance of the 16th of February 1745.

HIS Majesty being informed, that the different Punishments, expressed in the Decrees, Declarations and Ordonnances, published against those who assist at the unlawful Assemblies of the new Converts, have not yet been sufficient entirely to stop the Course of them, because they make but slight Impressions upon People, whose Minds are filled with Error, and produce the Fear only of a Punishment, from which each one flatters himself he shall escape; and his Majesty being willing to put an End to these Disorders, which would totally cease, if those of the new Converts, who thro' fear being surprized themselves in the Assemblies, of which they have always Notice, and who, not fearing to let their Children and Domesticks go, but often sending them there, were to desist from thus favouring and fomenting the Assemblies by their ill Counsels, or by their Connivance and Silence, which render them not less guilty of Disobedience, than those even who assist therein, He would resolve upon obliging all new Converts. for their own Sakes, to prevent the Holding such Assemblies, or to give Information of them, seeing they are never kept without their Knowledge; or would punish them, as Accomplices of the said Assemblies, by subjecting those, who shall not inform against them, to the Payment of pecuniary and arbitrary Fines, which, for the Future, shall be indifferently laid upon all new Converts in the Cantons of the District of *Montauban*,
where

where any Assemblies shall be held : To these Ends his Majesty has ordered and does Order,

ARTICLE I.

That in all the Corporations of the District of *Montauban*, comprized in the State of the Divisions, (called *Arrondissemens*) which shall be immediately drawn up by the Intendant of the said District, whom his Majesty has authorized and does authorize for that Purpose, all the new Converts, inhabiting within the Extent of the Divisions, shall be responsible for all the Assemblies which shall be held upon the Territory of the Corporations, whereof each Division shall be composed.

II.

The new Converts, Inhabitants of the Divisions, in the Extent of which it shall be proved that some Assemblies have been held, shall be condemned, without any Tryal or even Hearing by the said Intendant, to pay an arbitrary Fine, proportioned to their Ability ; and also to pay the Charges of the Proceedings, which shall have been had, on Account of the said Assemblies ; and the Assessments of the Fines and Charges shall be made by him, on the Knowledge he shall have of them, upon all the new converted Inhabitants, who shall be found comprized in the Lists of the Capitation, or Poll-Tax, in all the Corporations of the Division.

III.

His Majesty wills, that those of the new Converts, who perform their Duty as Catholicks, and shall justify it by Certificates from their Bishops or Grand Vicars, importing, that they frequent the Church and Sacraments, and that they have, for three preceding and successive Years, at least, regularly performed all their Paschal Duties, shall not be comprehended in the abovesaid Assessments, unless there be Proof against them of their having attended at, or favour'd the said Assemblies.

IV.

IV.

The new Converts of a Corporation of any Division, within the Extent of which an Assembly shall be held, who shall give Advice and furnish Proof of it, shall likewise be excepted on the Assessment; and when the said Advices shall have been given time enough, to surprize the Assembly, all the People of that Corporation shall be discharged of the Fine, and their Portion thrown upon the rest of the Division.

V.

If any Assembly be held upon the Territory of a Corporation wholly composed of old Catholicks, and not comprehended in the State of the Divisions, the Fine, in that Case, shall be born by the Divisions that are the nearest to the Place, where such Assembly shall be held, in the Manner as shall be regulated and ordered by the said Intendant.

VI.

If it happens, that any Assembly be held upon a Ground that is doubtful, and contested between some Corporations of the Divisions, and some other Corporations of other Divisions, the Fines, in that Case, shall be born by the Divisions which are nearest to the contested Ground, in the Manner as shall likewise be regulated and ordered by the said Intendant.

VII.

All private Persons, comprehended in the Lists of Assessment, who shall be fined, shall be forced to the Payment of their Rates, by actual settled Garrisons.

VIII.

And whereas the Preachers who come from Abroad, or are brought up in the Country, and who are the principal Authors of all the Assemblies, could not keep them up, if they were not readily admitted and maintained in the Houses of new Converts, which is a Thing intirely opposite to the Prohibitions heretofore made on this Subject, His Majesty orders, that
all

all the new Converts of the Corporations of a Division in the Limits of which a Peacher may be arrested, shall be condemned in a Fine of 3000 Livers, to be given to the Informers who shall have procured his being taken up; and this, independently of the Suit, which shall be made and carried on, agreeable to the Rigour of the former Ordonnances, Edicts and Declarations, against him, in whose House the Preacher shall have been found.

IX.

His Majesty does not intend by the present Ordonnance to derogate from the Dispositions of the Edicts, Declarations, Decrees and Ordonnances published upon the Subject of the said Assemblies, and particularly from that of the 1st of the present Month and Year, which shall be all executed according to their Form and Tenor. His Majesty orders and requires the said Intendant of the District of *Montauban*, to see to the Execution of the present Ordonnance, which shall be published and posted up where-ever it shall be necessary, that no one may ever pretend Cause of Ignorance. Done at *Versailles* the 16th of *February* 1744.

And lower

Signed *Louis*,
By the King,
Phelypeaux.

The Injustice and Cruelty of such Declarations, are so obvious, that every one must be struck with them; however, in order they should be executed in their fullest Extent, the Court hath sent into the District of *Montauban*, and Places adjacent, the favourite Missionaries, several Troops of Dragoons, who, acting like themselves, have committed the most outrageous Violences, and the most unheard of Excesses, and have reduced upwards of 6000 Souls to Beggary, and the City of *Montauban* to a more miserable Condition than it ever knew, even after the Wars it has been several Times obliged to maintain in its own Defence. This occasioned several Thousand Men, fill'd with
Despair,

Despair, to retire into the Woods, to defend a life there which they should be sure to loose, if they remained in the open Country. Resistance is either never to be admitted, or it must be in such Circumstances as these. Nature authorizes it, Reason prompts to it.

En quo violentia Cives.

Perduxit miseros !

Tantum Religio potuit suadere malorum !

Besides, Persecution rageth in *Dauphiny*; the Prisons there are fill'd with Protestants, who have been taken up for being found in Assemblies; several have been outlaw'd; almost every where they endeavour to secure their Lives by Flight. The 16th of *February* a Minister named *Roux*, was arrested in the Borough of *Livron*, put into Prison, and loaded with Fetters; the 12th of *March* he was hanged in the City of *Die*: After the Execution they cut off his Head, and expos'd it in the Place, where he had been taken; an Example of Cruelty unheard off till now. Others have been condemned to suffer Pains of an extraordinary Severity; and, amongst others, one named *Raille*, of *Oste*, near *Cret*, who, for having performed the Office of Reader in an Assembly, has lately been condemned by the Parliament of *Grenoble* to be whipt by the Hand of the Hangman, marked, and sent to the Gallies for Life; which was to have been executed the 15th of *March*.

We expect every Day to have farther Accounts of these tragical Examples. And it seems necessary, on many Accounts, that we should not be intirely ignorant of them in this Country.

Such is the Situation of Catholick *France*, under the Reign of *Louis* the XVth. It was not, without doubt, by Declarations which have such fatal Effects, that that Prince acquired the Title of *Well-beloved*; nor, will it be by such Edicts, that he can hope to preserve it.

F I N I S

A
FRIENDLY LETTER
TO THE
British SOLDIER Y.

Gentlemen,

YOU are the Persons upon whom the Eyes and the Hopes of your dear Country are fixed, as the Guardians of our Liberties and Properties against our Enemies both abroad and at home. Nor are they without Reason fixed upon you, as so many Proofs have been given of your Bravery and Courage, which has not been outdone by any, and is equal'd by few. But alas! how are our Hopes dash'd, and how much Pain are we in, both for our own Sakes and for yours, when we consider how many wicked and profane Persons there are among you---for our own Sakes we tremble to think what little Cause we have to expect God's Blessing upon your Arms for our Defence, when there are so many who make Cursing and Swearing their common Language, and Drunkenness their daily Practice.——And for you too are we in Pain to think what a dreadful Condition you wou'd be plunged into, shou'd you fall in the Field, whilst you are Enemies to God, and are fighting against him. And can a greater Instance of Esteem and Gratitude be shewn you, than to endeavour to awaken you out of your
Stupidity,

Stupidity, and to turn you from Sin to God?

Think then with yourselves, I beseech you——

“ Do I carry my Life in my Hands, am I in

“ Danger of Death every Moment, and shall I

“ be so sottish and stupid as to rush upon ever-

“ lasting Damnation——that Damnation I have

“ so often called down upon myself and others,

“ as if it were a Blessing? But oh the dreadful

“ Misery exceeds my Imagination! A Bullet

“ may in a Moment send me from the Field of

“ Battle, from Fire and Smoke and the Roar-

“ ing of the Cannon, down to Hell, and to the

“ Fire that never can be quenched, to that Tor-

“ ment, the Smoke of which ascendeth up for

“ ever and ever before God, there to howl,

“ lament and roar under the Weight of Divine

“ Vengeance with Devils and damned Spirits.

“ How often have I dared the Wrath of God,

“ by blaspheming his holy Name, by bitter

“ Oaths and Curses; and wou'd it not be just

“ in him to take me at my Word, and seal

“ me up unto endless Misery? O wicked Crea-

“ ture! O impious Wretch! Lord have Mercy

“ upon me, and turn my Heart to thyself, that

“ so if I shou'd die in the Defence of my Coun-

“ try, I may not only die honourably in the

“ Sight of Men, but with safety to my poor

“ Soul, and be received by thee into the Joys of

“ Eternity.

I beseech you to think seriously of these Things; be often speaking of them to one another; and when you have thought of them as you ought, throw yourselves upon your Knees, beg of God to forgive your past Sins

for

for the Sake of Jesus Christ, and intreat him to give you Grace to forsake them for Time to come. This will animate you with true Courage, and make you valiant beyond what any Thing else will; and this will strengthen our Hope that God will by your Means give us a compleat Victory over our Enemies. And to encourage you further to leave off your Sins, and to turn to God, consider how merciful and gracious he is, how ready to pardon even the greatest of Sinners, such as yourselves have been. And now, will you not follow this friendly Advice? Do not your Consciences tell you it is good Advice, and that you ought to follow it? Don't then turn a deaf Ear to it, and go on to harden your Hearts as Steel against your own Salvation. Remember God is a holy and a just God, and his Anger will pierce as a Sword into your Souls, and make the most painful Wounds there which can never be cured. Remember that you may be alive this Moment, and be shot dead the next; and that sudden Death, where there is no Preparation for it, is of all Things most dreadful. Who can dwell with devouring Flames? Who can inhabit everlasting Burnings? Is the Heart even of an *English* Soldier stout enough to bear the Thought of this without Trembling and Horror? You can face the Mouth of a Cannon without Fear, and are not dismayed at the Noise of the Drum calling you to Battle;—But can you behold the Face of an angry Sin-avenging God without Fear, or be under no Confusion and Terror when his Voice, more dreadful than Peals of bursting Thunder, shall say to you

—Depart

—Depart from me ye Cursed into everlasting Fire, prepared for the Devils and his Angels? No—this will quell your stout and stubborn Hearts, and even rend them with Despair and Anguish. You scorn to turn your Back upon an Enemy; but if God be your Enemy, how gladly wou'd you fly from him, and creep into the most noisome Dungeon to avoid his Presence! But there will be no running away from him—no avoiding his Sight,—no escaping his Wrath. Wherefore break off your Sins by a timely Repentance, and by accepting Jesus Christ, as he is preached to Sinners in the Gospel—and then while you live will you be the Defenders of our King and Country, and when you die it will be to your everlasting Honour and Happiness.

F I N I S.



Typ. S. Farley.

